

2003 Perinatal Group B Strep Survey Executive Summary

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In April 2003, the Washington State Department of Health asked laboratories in Washington State to participate in a survey of current practices on the processing of perinatal Group B Streptococcus (GBS) cultures. The purpose of the survey was to assess current practices in order to best utilize limited funds available for education and the development of resources to implement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revised guidelines (Prevention of Perinatal Group B Streptococcal Disease. *MMWR* 2002; 51 No. RR-11).

Approximately 111 surveys were distributed via e-mail and fax. The electronic mailing list was derived from the Medical Test Site licensing program database and was limited to laboratories that performed Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing in their Microbiology Departments. Duplicate surveys may have been received by those laboratories receiving both e-mail and fax surveys. Of the 111 laboratories who were sent surveys, 82 responses were received (74% response rate). Of these, 17 respondents reported that they did not perform GBS testing on pregnant women in Washington State resulting in 65 completed surveys by laboratories. Not all respondents completed all questions, and some respondents who reported they did not perform GBS testing completed the full questionnaire.

Survey Respondents:

- 59% Perform GBS cultures on pregnant women
- 21% Perform GBS cultures, but cannot differentiate between pregnant and non-pregnant clients
- 21% Do not perform GBS cultures on pregnant women

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding error.

Location of Laboratory:

- 23% King County
- 8% Spokane County
- 6% Pierce County
- 5% Snohomish County
- 4% No county selected
- 54% Distributed in small numbers in the remaining 25 counties from which responses were received.

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Practice Guidelines

The following practice guidelines have been developed by the Clinical Laboratory Advisory Council. They can be accessed at the following website:
www.doh.wa.gov/lqa.htm

Anemia	Lipid Screening
ANA	Point-of-Care Testing
Bioterrorism Event Mgmt	PSA
Bleeding Disorders	Red Cell Transfusion
Chlamydia	Renal Disease
Diabetes	STD
Group A Strep Pharyngitis	Thyroid
Hepatitis	Tuberculosis
HIV	Urinalysis
Intestinal Parasites	Wellness

Group B Strep Survey, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

STRENGTHS AND AREAS OF COMPLIANCE

Selective enrichment broth: 78% of laboratories who perform GBS cultures report that they use a selective enrichment broth for processing specimens for group B streptococcal culture. An additional six laboratories (9%) report that they use a non-selective enrichment broth.

The CDC recommends using selective broth enrichment for processing group B strep culture. Numerous studies show increased sensitivity and specificity for group B strep using selective broth enrichment.

Subculture plating media: 92% of labs performing GBS culture utilize a sheep blood agar plate for subculturing the broth.

The CDC guidelines recommend subculturing the inoculated selective broth to a sheep blood agar plate.

EDUCATION/CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Site of collection: 31% of laboratories performing GBS culture report only processing specimens from the vagina and rectum. An additional 55% of labs reported processing some specimens from the vagina and rectum, but also from other sites. We have no information on the volume of specimens from differing sites.

The CDC guidelines state that specimens should be from both the vagina and rectum to increase the yield of group B strep in culture.

ELABORATIONS is a free monthly publication of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Public Health Laboratories (PHL) and Office of Laboratory Quality Assurance (LQA).

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NOTE: Letters to the editor may be published unless specified otherwise by the author.

Website addresses:

DOH home page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov>
LQA home page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/lqa.htm>
PHL home page:
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/default.htm>

Length of incubation before cultures are reported as negative: 15% of labs performing GBS cultures report results as negative after only 18-24 hours of incubation on a solid medium.

The CDC guidelines state that if GBS is not detected after 18-24 hours, the culture should be re-incubated and inspected at 48 hours.

Antibiotic susceptibility testing on penicillin-allergic patients: 73% of laboratories performing GBS cultures report that they are not automatically performing susceptibility testing for GBS when a patient is penicillin allergic.

The CDC guidelines recommend susceptibility testing for clindamycin and erythromycin when a patient is penicillin allergic. Although this procedure is ordered by the provider, there may be potential for developing standing protocols or policies within individual laboratories.

Informing provider of inappropriate sample source:

74% of laboratories performing GBS culture report that they do not notify providers who send cervical specimens that such specimens are not recommended for group B strep culture. There may be potential for improved dialogue about the guidelines between laboratories and providers.

Other findings:

11% of labs performing GBS cultures report that they are using antigen test kits for the detection of GBS directly from specimens rather than from culture.

Although Infectio Diagnostics recently received FDA approval (November 2002) for a rapid GBS screen with similar sensitivity to culture, it is unclear whether these labs that responded are using the new technology.

SUMMARY:

It is encouraging that many laboratories responding to the survey are using a selective enrichment broth and then plating onto a blood agar plate. There may be potential for education and consultation with laboratories and providers regarding site of collection, susceptibility testing in penicillin-allergic patients, informing providers of inappropriate sample source, and length of culture incubation time. In addition, the use of rapid antigen testing directly from specimens should include a dialogue around the currently available kits, ensuring the use of the most sensitive approved technology where available.

Advanced Blood Cell Morphology

Date: April 14, 2004

Registration Fee: \$105.00

Course Length: 1 day

COURSE CONTENT: The lecture section of this one-day course will cover the following subjects:

- √ Selected cases involving WBCs, RBCs and/or platelet pathology
- √ Examination of red and white cell morphology using slide presentations and quizzes
- √ Microscopic examination of actual case slides
- √ Lab challenges - examination of unknown specimens to test your abilities

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: This advanced course is designed for an experienced MT/MLT who would like some review and some enhancement of hematology morphology skills.

CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS: Students will receive 0.6 CEUs for completion of this course. Applicants must plan to attend the entire workshop to receive CEUs.

If you would like more information about this class, call Shelley Lankford, Training Program Manager, at (206) 361-2810 or e-mail the training program at PHL.training@doh.wa.gov. You can also download training registration forms at the Public Health Laboratories Training Program website at the following website: www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/train.htm.

Advanced Blood Cell Morphology Training Course

Registration Form

Name: _____

Employer: _____

Employer Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work Phone: _____ FAX: _____

E-mail: _____ Message Phone: _____

Class date: Wednesday, April 14, 2004

HOW TO REGISTER: Complete the registration form and mail to the **Department of Health, PHL Training Program, 1610 NE 150th Street, PO Box 550501, Shoreline, WA 98155-9701** or fax to: **(206) 361-2904**. A confirmation packet will be sent to you by mail. The packet will contain your registration confirmation, payment instructions and a map to the course location. Please **do not** send money with your registration form.

Registration Fee: \$105.00 **Registration Deadline:** Friday, March 26, 2004

LQA Staffing Update

by Gail Neuenschwander

Gary Utter, surveyor for the past four years for the Office of Laboratory Quality Assurance, retired on December 31, 2003. Lori Hudson has been hired to replace Gary. Lori is currently working out of the Olympia and Seattle offices, but will be relocating to Eastern Washington sometime this year. Lori can be reached at (360)236-2966 or by email at Lori.Hudson@doh.wa.gov.

Joan Carlson has also left the Office of Laboratory Quality Assurance. Joan officially retired the end of April 2002, but helped us out doing surveys part-time in 2003. If you are used to calling Joan with questions, you can call Lori Hudson, until she relocates in Eastern Washington, or you can call our main office in Seattle at (206)361-2805.

Calendar of Events

PHL Training Classes:

(<http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/train.htm>)

Advanced Blood Cell Morphology
April 14 Shoreline

WSSCLS/NWSSAMT Spring Meeting

April 29-May 1 Vancouver

Northwest Medical Laboratory Symposium

October 20-23 Portland

11th Annual Clinical Laboratory Conference

November 8 Seattle

Contact information for the events listed above can be found on page 2. The Calendar of Events is a list of upcoming conferences, deadlines, and other dates of interest to the clinical laboratory community. If you have events that you would like to have included, please mail them to ELABORATIONS at the address on page 2. Information must be received at least one month before the scheduled event. The editor reserves the right to make final decisions on inclusion.